

13 June 1973

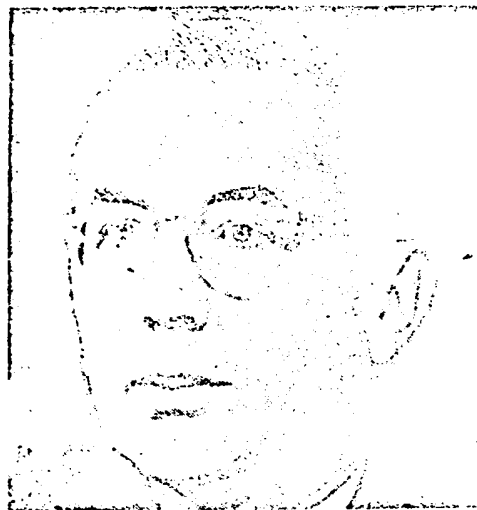
New CIA chief headed mass

Liberation News Service

One of those lucky enough to be kicked upstairs and not out of office by the recent Watergate shakeup was William E. Colby, the CIA's deputy director of operations.

On May 10, Nixon announced that CIA head James R. Schlesinger had been shoved into the Secretary of Defense slot and that Colby had been nominated to take over as CIA chief.

Viewed in the ever-growing shadow of the Watergate, the appointment of Colby, a 30-



William Colby, new CIA chief.

year veteran of clandestine intelligence work, raised considerable concern. Critics warned that with a career man as director, the CIA's actions would be even more uncontrollable than they are now.

Colby became involved in intelligence work in 1943 when he joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner to the CIA. After taking time out to get a law degree, he re-joined what was by then the CIA, in 1950. He has been with the agency ever since.

One of Colby's major assignments in the

agency was Southeast Asia, where, beginning in 1959, he worked out of the U.S. embassy in Saigon. He was eventually returned to the CIA's McLean, Va. headquarters in 1962 as Chief of the Far East Division. This meant, in effect, that he was in charge of CIA operations in Vietnam.

Later Colby was sent back to Vietnam to run Operation Phoenix, part of the American pacification program. In January 1972, six months after his return to the U.S., Colby was promoted to executive director of the agency. And in March 1973, he was named deputy director of the CIA's clandestine services, otherwise known as the "Department of Dirty Tricks."

The Committee for Action Research on the Intelligence Community (CARIC), an independent watch-dog committee composed of former intelligence personnel, Vietnam veterans and other individuals, points to Colby's resume as good reason for his nomination to be opposed by Congress.

CARIC cites Saigon government statistics that show that under Colby's direction, the Phoenix program murdered 55,454 men, women and children by 1971 and that another 100,000 people had been imprisoned in efforts to rid South Vietnam of "suspected communists." CARIC suggests that Colby's quick series of promotions in the last year and a half were his reward for being the CIA apologist for the Phoenix program before Congress.

In testimony about Operation Phoenix before Congress in July and August of 1971, Colby conceded that there had been "occasional abuses,"—such as political assassinations and the killing of civilians—but he maintained that the program was "an essential part of the war."

Robert W. Komer, who preceded Colby as head of Phoenix, described him as an "absolutely committed hard-line Vietnam veteran," a man to whom the ends of the agency justify any means.